

cat people





A Walk on the Wild Side. Things are looking black on this stormy night.

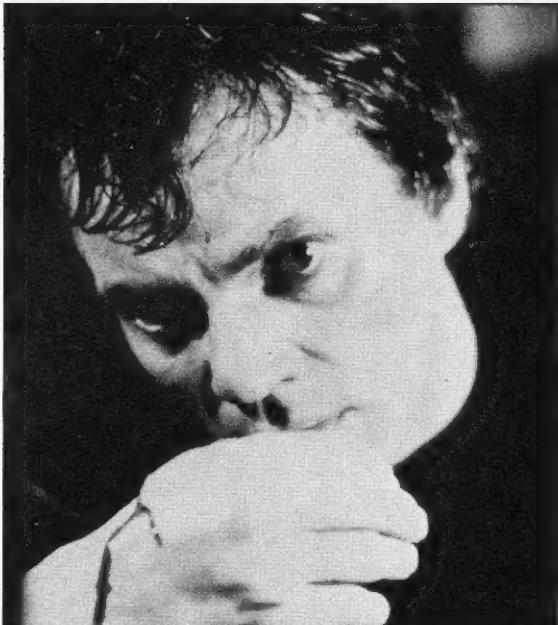
40 YEARS AGO...

THE CAT PEOPLE prowled the screen.
NOW—they're back!
And their backs are up.
And the hackles on the back of your necks may
soon rise!

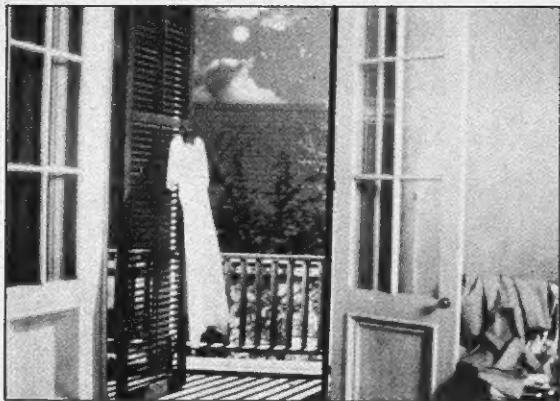
more lives than 9

The scripter of the new CAT PEOPLE is Alan Ormsby and so far in his young life he's led 27 lives, so to speak! He's been actor, cartoonist, makeup artist, toy designer, book author (for children), playwright, and writer & director of low-budget horror films, among many other occupations.

Alan started out like many another young fan, reading FAMOUS MONSTERS, discovering (or being discovered by) the fanzine *Black Oracle* (whose editor George "Bloody Hunks" Stover is one of our "Lo, Ghoul Boys" who has made good). He was bowled over by KING KONG & FRANKENSTEIN and has seen Disney's PINOCCHIO more than a dozen times. In 1975 he created the book "Movie Monsters" and 3 years later landed a dream assignment, to script the new version of the Val Lewton classic, THE CAT PEOPLE.



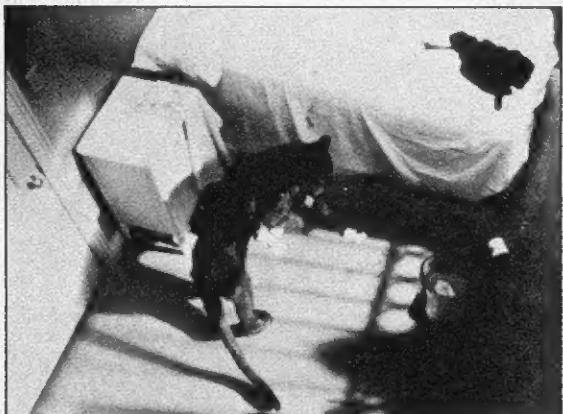
The female feline spells fear.



The Room of Doom.



See the picture and discover the scary meaning of this scene.



Prelude to CATastrophe...

"Actually," Alan says, "THE CAT PEOPLE is not a remake of the original, except in a technical sense. Like THE THING, there are many divergences from the first film. The Lewton CAT PEOPLE was great in its day, as was THE THING, but now Carpenter is bringing John Campbell's 'Who Goes There?' to the screen as Campbell no doubt would've liked to have seen it done while he was alive, and the new version of THE CAT PEOPLE is a state-of-the art picture, a modernized version of what was done in 1942."

the cat's meow

Perhaps at this point we should time travel back 40 years and acquaint you with the plot of the first film about the feline folk.

THE CAT PEOPLE (1942)

The story opens in a most unusual way. A lovely young girl, Irena Dubrovna (SIMONE SIMON), is sketching in a park: a highly offbeat picture of a panther with a sword piercing its side. Dissatisfied with her drawings, she keeps throwing them on the ground and has created a considerable mess when a young man approaches her and, a twinkle in his eye, quotes a poem:

*Let no one say it to your face
And say it to your shame
That this all was beauty
Before you came.*

Irena, a bit embarrassed, admits she was absentminded. She is attracted to the young man, Oliver Reed (!!!!!) (KENT SMITH) and soon they're in love and are to be married. But-

Irena is afraid she might harm her love because of legends of her home country. She has heard that in her native village in the Carpathians, a long time before the Crusades, evil reigned and the women became witches and the men warlocks. Because of the buried hatred, evil & jealousy in them, the women had the power to turn into cats if they kissed their lovers. Not ordinary small felines of house-cat size but huge jungle brutes. The beasts would kill their lovers. Irena's mother was one of these sinister shape-changers when she died and the terror has haunted Irena all her life that hers is tainted blood and to kiss Oliver might mean to kill him.

"The Cat at the Table"

"Don't be silly, darling." Oliver calms Irena's fears. The wedding takes place. All goes well. But that night, at the celebration feast, Irena's fears are roused again when a friend of Oliver's, Jim Carver (Alan Napier), innocently remarks of a guest, "Doesn't she look remarkably like a cat?"

The "cat woman" comes to the table and whispers something in Irena's ear. Something in Irena's native tongue that causes her to shudder and cross herself. Oliver's friend Alice (Jane Randolph), observes Irena's discomfort and tries to calm her evident nervousness.



Is this Skeleton the Key to the Mystery?

"Feline Folk? A Joke!"

Alice persuades Irena to see a psychiatrist she recommends. Dr. Judd (Tom Conway) sees Irena in his clinic and, not believing her story about a race of cat people, attempts to exorcize her superstitious belief. But even his treatments fail to disabuse Irena of her firm conviction and her unfortunate state of mind causes friction between her & her husband.

For some time Alice has secretly been in love with Oliver and now he begins to realize he feels an emotion toward her that is more than casual.

When Irena refuses to visit the psychiatrist any longer and keeps herself from Oliver (for fear of killing him), Oliver breaks down and confesses to her that he has become attracted to Alice. *This triggers the murder mania in Irena!*

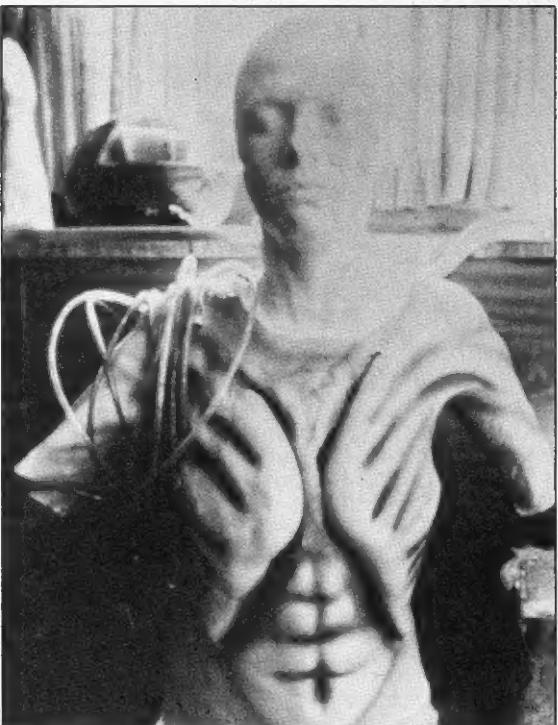
Irena's jealousy becomes hatred and she follows Alice one night as she leaves work to catch a bus. Alice has an eerie feeling that something is stalking her. She escapes harm but in a nearby zoo some sheep are slaughtered that night as if by a big cat.

"Panther!"

The next day Irena phones Oliver in his office. Alice answers.

Irena hangs up.

Alice suspects the mysterious caller was Irena and informs Oliver. They are about to leave the office when a huge shape suddenly materializes. It is like a giant panther, attacking them! Seiz-



The Shape(changer) of Things to Claw.

ing a T-square from his architect's table, Oliver brandishes it like a crucifix and cries, "In the name of God, leave us in peace!"

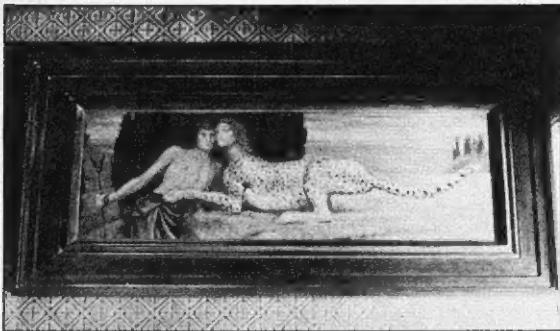
The shadow of the T-square, like that of a cross, causes the "thing" to slink away.

That night a weeping Irena tries to communicate to Oliver what happened but he doesn't believe her. "You *must* see the psychiatrist again!" he orders her.

In the hotel where Alice stays is a swimming pool. Alice goes for a swim. This is one of the classic scenes in the picture. She hears the coughing of a huge invisible beast of prey. A creepy shadow darkens the waters, encircles the lone swimmer. Alice's screams of terror bring an attendant running and her bathrobe is found torn to shreds. But no prowling panther is to be seen--only Irena, in her natural human form.

"Deadly Cure"

The psychiatrist has become enamored of the intriguing Irena. He decides to wait for her at her apartment. When she arrives there she is surprised to find him waiting to greet her. She



Can you spot the Leopard Woman?

permits him to accompany her inside where, once in her room, he drops his psychiatrist's mask and reveals his human bestiality. He grabs her, declaring he is going to cure her once & for all of her foolish fixation.

Outside, occupants of the hotel hear a ferocious snarling.

Inside is--madness.

Judd is hurled against the wall. He grabs his cane and whips a sword from its sheath. He confronts something that we do not see but can easily conjecture the nature of.

We hear a jungle denizen snarl.

At this moment Oliver & Alice are entering the building. They hear a hideous, bloodcurdling scream. They rush upstairs.

"The Blade that Bleed"

At the top of the stairs, outside Irena's room, Oliver & Alice encounter a crowd. The screaming people are paralyzed by the sight of--something.

Oliver pushes thru the crowd. On the floor, torn & mangled as tho by a maddened jungle

beast, is the dead body of Judd. Oliver notes that the psychiatrist's sword-cane is broken in half and half of it is gone.

Oliver turns to Alice. Their eyes meet. There is a stark realization in both their gazes: this is the work of Irena and at this very moment *half the sword blade is imbedded in her body!*

"The zoo!" Oliver is convinced that is where his wife has headed. The panther there has always fascinated her.

At that moment the wounded Irena is opening the panther's cage. The animal leaps out, knocking over Irena and killing her.

The beast, in turn, is run over by a taxi and killed.

When Oliver & Alice arrive on the scene, Oliver bends over the broken lifeless body of Irena. Convinced now of the existence of the supernatural, of shape-changers and that the woman he loved became a lethal feline, "She never lied to us," he says sadly.

the new breed of cat

How Nastassia Kinski will differ from Simone Simon in her portrayal of the role of the cat woman will be fascinating to observe. Nastassia, of course, is the daughter of Klaus (NOSFERATU) Kinski.

Malcolm McDowell is no stranger to films of the fantastic, from "IF..." to A CLOCKWORK ORANGE to HG Wells himself in TIME AFTER TIME. He plays Irena's brother Paul.

This time round John Heard plays the lover, Oliver. (It is not known at this writing if he is still lastnamed Reed, altho one would tend to doubt it in view of its being the name of a well-known actor.)

Director Paul Schrader's previous pictures have, he says, been "about daydreams." This time he's involved with a nightmare!

A timeless myth...a bizarre destiny...a fantasy of terror & passion...are terms used to describe the new CAT PEOPLE.

The famous Tom Burman Studios are responsible for the spfx makeup. The cat vision sequence has been created by Robbie Blalack.

Have you ever seen a Popup Book? A Buck Rogers collectors item or a Flash Gordon, where you open a volume and something--a rocket, a city, a monster--springs up before your eyes? Well, don't close your eyes in the picture when a panther's belly is slit open--and be ready for a shock.

DEAD OF NIGHT...DERANGED...CHILDREN SHOULDN'T PLAY WITH DEAD THINGS--these have been previous horror films with which Ormsby has been associated. He has a 14-year-old son, Ethan. "My son has read the script."

"Will he be seeing the picture?"

"Definitely!"

WANTED! More Readers Like *Ethan Ormsby!*

END